UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

Wednesday, February 11, 2026

AI: Things Will Get Worse, Before They Get Better

Remember the Good Old Days when you could spot AI-written papers by made-up, "hallucinated" citations? Ah... them were the days!

Or direct to https://www.facebook.com/getliner/videos/1439802454250356/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: miscellaneous

The Council of UC Faculty Associations

- FAQs for Senate Faculty about Possible Strike by UAW; Winter 2026
- Fight for the Future of Higher Education: Academic Freedom from the Classroom to the Clinic
- Our Concerns Over Revisions to APMs 15 and 16
- Fight for the Future of Higher Ed Town Hall
- Letter from AAUP to UC Objecting to Trellix

Remaking the University

- Liner Note 48. The Faculty's Budget Fight at UCLA - 2/23/2026
- Liner Note 47. Did The Atlantic's Anti-Woke Bias Spoil its Analysis of Humanities Funding Death? - 2/16/2026
- Minneapolis Lessons for Higher Education - 1/31/2026

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- Chronicle of Higher Education
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Search This Blog

Search

UC Faculty Associations

- UCLA Faculty Association
- UCSB Faculty Association
- UCSC Faculty Association
- UCB Faculty Association
- Council of UC Faculty Associations

Other Faculty Organizations

- American Association of University Professors
- California Faculty Association (NEA)
- UC-AFT

Topics

Straws in the Wind - Part 250

From Inside Higher Ed: *Faculty members at regional public and community colleges in Oklahoma can no longer be granted tenure. Oklahoma governor Kevin Stitt decreed the end of tenure in an executive order, effective Thursday. The state has a "constitutional and statutory responsibility to steward taxpayer dollars wisely and ensure public institutions of higher education operate with accountability, transparency, and measurable outcomes," the order states.*

Public regional universities, which educate more than 54,000 students in the state combined, "shall not grant new lifetime tenure appointments," the order states. Instead, they may hire faculty under fixed-term, renewable contracts, and the renewals are dependent on professors' performance, student outcomes, "alignment with workforce and Oklahoma economic needs" and "institutional service." Faculty members at these institutions who already have tenure may retain it. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 761 faculty members at Oklahoma regional colleges had tenure in 2024, and 412 faculty members were on the tenure track.

Faculty at public research universities—which includes the University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma State University and their health sciences institutions—may still receive tenure or tenure-track appointments, but will be subject to post-tenure review every five years or fewer and may be fired for "sustained failure to meet established performance standards." ...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty-issues/tenure/2026/02/05/tenure-eliminated-oklahoma-colleges.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, Oklahoma State U, politics, U of Oklahoma

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 120

From the Harvard Crimson: *Faculty voiced cautious support for a proposal that would cap undergraduate A grades at roughly 20 percent and introduce an internal ranking system, saying the policy would curb longstanding grade inflation at the College. But the proposal has also prompted concerns among some professors, who warned that the cap could impose an unrealistic standard for distinction, threaten faculty autonomy, and foster unhealthy competition.*

politics (2413) UC (2114) UC Regents (1894) health care (1428) State Budget (1278) governor (1127) diversity (987) UC budget crisis (973) UC-Berkeley (915) pension (663) pensions (594) admissions (550) athletics (545) tuition (534) CSU (415) transportation (398) UC-Davis (377) online education (339) UCOP (313) uc retirement (309) traffic (301) ucrp (301) audio (291) UC enrollment (284) new hotel-conference center (282) UC-San Diego (265) enrollment (261) community colleges (248) LAO (233) UC-Irvine (185) fund raising (169) UC-Santa Barbara (163) UC-San Francisco (160) UC-Santa Cruz (159) controller (150) faculty center (144) UC-Riverside (142) ballot propositions (132) CalPERS (122) UC-Merced (117) Master Plan (110) faculty pay (109) Yudof (90) UCRS retirement (62) Faculty Association at UCLA (61) parking (61) privatization (59) CalSTRS (50) UC Berkeley (35) copyright (35) campus climate survey (28) UCRS (22) Michigan Model (18) UC Merced (17) uc funding (16) Regents (15) State Contribution (14) UCOF (14) faculty recruitment (12) UC pay (7) graduate education (6) UC San Diego (5) UCpolitics (4) UC Irvine (3) teaching evaluation (3) UC Santa Cruz (2)

Blog Archive

▼ 2026 (223)
▼ March (4)
Bad News, Good News
Straws in the Wind - Part 268
Maybe we worry too much about AI ???
I Never Promised You a Rose Bowl? - Part 15
► February (106)
► January (113)
► 2025 (1139)
► 2024 (832)
► 2023 (828)
► 2022 (719)
► 2021 (710)
► 2020 (914)
► 2019 (671)
► 2018 (595)
► 2017 (666)
► 2016 (715)

A faculty committee released the proposal last week as part of a broader effort to rein in grade inflation. The recommendations, which will come to a full faculty vote later this spring, would limit A grades to 20 percent per course, with flexibility for up to four additional As per class, and introduce a percentile-based ranking system to determine internal honors and awards. In interviews and statements, more than a dozen faculty welcomed the attempt to impose a systematic check on grade inflation.

..."Grading is a collective action problem. When some instructors raise their grades, that puts pressure on other instructors to raise their grades too, and the pressure for higher grades snowballs over time, making it hard for any course to hold the line," Economics professor David I. Laibson '88 wrote in a statement.

...Other professors cautioned that the proposal could pose a danger to faculty autonomy. Government professor Steven Levitsky said he disliked what he described as the inflexibility of the recommendations, arguing that they infringed on faculty authority in the classroom. Still, he said, the proposal was preferable to the status quo. "I would characterize it a bit like the way that Winston Churchill characterized democracy, which is that it's the worst possible arrangement — except for all the others," he said...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/2/10/grade-report-reaction/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Just the (Corrected) Facts - Part 4

If you have been following the situation in which the UCLA Academic Senate has been trying to obtain useful and comprehensive budgetary information from Murphy Hall, you know that it has yet to succeed. You probably also know that at its February 5th meeting, the Legislative Assembly of the campus Senate passed a resolution with lots of Whereas... clauses, asking for the missing information.*

We said in our last posting on this issue that there did not seem to be any opposition to the resolution. An email circulated yesterday afternoon confirmed that the resolution passed 107-0. That would seem to be a definitive expression of opinion.

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Resolution on Shared Governance, Senate Consultation, and Administrative Accountability

Legislative Assembly members voted via the Academic Senate Data Management System on the Resolution on Shared Governance, Senate Consultation, and Administrative Accountability. The Legislative Assembly received a total of 107 votes cast: 107 Approve, 0 Oppose. This Resolution required a majority of votes cast by present members to be approved. [AIPSC (2nd ed.) 5.1]. All eligible votes cast (100%) were to approve this resolution.

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*https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2026/02/just-corrected-facts-part-3.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:35 AM No comments:

Labels: UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 249

► 2015 (765)
► 2014 (704)
► 2013 (776)
► 2012 (839)
► 2011 (738)
► 2010 (431)
► 2009 (12)

Contributors

- California Policy Issues
- Toby Higbie
- UCLA Faculty Association

From the Brown Daily Herald: *President Christina Paxson P'19 P'MD'20, emphasized the importance of maintaining the University's core values while navigating security questions following the shooting on Dec. 13 at Tuesday's faculty meeting. Paxson updated faculty members on a new community initiative called "Brown Loves Providence," new security initiatives and the post-shooting reviews. The University expedited its process of adding blue light phones and panic buttons to classrooms, Paxson said, especially in places where staff handle cash, so that they "feel more secure." ...*

Paxson acknowledged ...concerns, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a sense of "openness" on campus. "When people go to an academic seminar, they shouldn't feel like they're going through TSA to board an international flight," Paxson added.

This spring, the University will be conducting "trauma-informed active shooter training," Paxson added...

Full story at https://www.browndailyherald.com/article/2026/02/paxson-shares-hopes-to-keep-brown-both-open-and-secure-at-february-faculty-meeting.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Brown University

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 119

From the Harvard Crimson: *Harvard students slammed a proposal to cap A grades and use raw percentage scores for internal awards, warning that the changes would intensify academic competition, misrepresent students' mastery of course material, and harm postgraduate prospects. If approved by faculty, the 19-page plan — released Friday by the Office of Undergraduate Education — would limit the number of A grades to 20 percent of each course, with room for up to four extra As per course. The proposal also included a new "average percentile rank" system, which uses students' raw numeric scores to determine internal awards rather than grade point averages...*

But in more than two dozen interviews with The Crimson, students overwhelmingly urged faculty to reject the proposal. "You accept a bunch of top 3 percent students in the country and then get surprised that we're getting all As," Harlow W. Tong '28 said. "I don't understand the point of ranking against each other." Tong added that lowering average GPAs would reduce the value of a Harvard education...

Ricardo A. Fernandes Garcia ’27 expressed concerns that the proposal would foster competitive incentives, damaging Harvard’s collaborative academic culture...

Bhargavi A. Limbachiya ’29 predicted that the proposal would unduly increase students’ stress and anxiety levels...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/2/7/students-slam-grading-proposal/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard

Monday, February 9, 2026

Names

At the Feb. 12th systemwide Assembly of the UC Academic Senate, the following resolution is up for consideration after discussion at a prior meeting ended discussion when attendance fell below a quorum:

ACTION REQUESTED: The Assembly is asked to vote on the amended resolution.

Whereas on December 18, 2024, the University of California offered to enter in an agreement with the Department of Education to provide the Office of Civil Rights with “an electronic sortable spreadsheet or other file of the responses by the University or the individual campus to all complaints and reports alleging discrimination, including harassment and disparate treatment, on the basis of actual or perceived national origin, including shared Jewish, Palestinian, Muslim, and/or Arab ancestry, or association with these national origins/ancestries, during the preceding academic year at UCLA, UCSB, UCSD, UCD, and UCSC.”

Whereas the University agreed to share with the Office of Civil Rights the names of faculty members, students, staff, and others who reported (‘the reporter’), the individual allegedly subjected to discrimination or harassment (“the complainant”), the individuals who (have been allegedly) engaged in discrimination/harassment (“the respondent(s)”), and any witnesses to the alleged incidents, regardless of the outcome of the cases.

Whereas on November 19, 2025, Deputy General Counsel Allison Woodall from UC Legal clarified that “UC complied with its reporting obligation under the agreement on September 30, 2025, by providing EDOCR with a spreadsheet of relevant civil rights complaints that redacted all personally identifiable information from the spreadsheet. Therefore, no names or other personally identifiable information were released.”

Whereas there have been credible allegations that the current U.S. Presidential Administration has attempted to deport noncitizens, including scholars and students, who have been lawfully admitted to the United States, based on First Amendment-protected speech and advocacy with which the Administration disagrees.

Whereas on October 27, 2025, the Academic Council of the Academic Senate issued a statement expressing strong concern over the University’s disclosure of personally identifiable information (PII) to federal authorities during an investigation of UC Berkeley by the Office of Civil Rights, warning of harm to academic freedom and trust, and urging the UC administration to strengthen privacy safeguards, ensure timely notifications, and consult faculty experts on future disclosure decisions.
Be it therefore resolved that the Assembly of the Academic Senate of the University of California endorses, affirms, and adopts the Statement issued by the Academic Senate Council.

Be it further resolved that the Assembly of the Academic Senate of the University of California urges the UC Office of the President and the UC Board of Regents to inform individuals in advance of the disclosure of their personally identifiable information upon the request for such information.

Source: https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/assembly/assembly-agenda-2-12-26.pdf.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, politics, UC, UC-Berkeley

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